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JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#)  
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2009

#### Media Highlights:

Davutoglu: Integration with Europe Key Aspect of Turkish Foreign Policy

Tuesday papers report extensively on Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu's interview with Newsweek, trumping coverage of Newsweek's foreign policy analysis in "Triumph of the Turks." Mainstream Aksam says Davutoglu, a moderate, believes claims that Turkey has shifted Eastward had been spread by those who were jealous of Ankara's expanding role in its region and underlines Newsweek's claim that "even his own country did not know Davutoglu well enough." In "With America Our Agenda is the Same," leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet highlights that Davutoglu said the ties between Turkey and the US were now "much better" as compared to the times of the Bush administration. Cumhuriyet reports Davutoglu as telling Newsweek that Turkey was both "European and Asian," and therefore it needed a "multi-dimensional foreign policy." In "Turkey Won't Wait till 2023," Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak reports Davutoglu said Turkey would be a member of the EU before 2023, adding it would also be among the 10 leading economies around the world. Mainstream Milliyet emphasizes that Davutoglu said the histories of 20 countries in the Middle East and the Balkans cannot be written without using Turkish archives, and that "NATO is Turkey's strongest alliance, and integration with Europe is the main objective of Turkish foreign policy. But it doesn't mean that because of these strong ties, we can ignore the Middle East, Central Asia, North Africa or Africa."

#### Erdogan's Washington Mission

Turkish media coverage of US-Turkey relations ahead of the PM visit varied greatly during the long Kurban Bayram holiday, with most news reports predicting that Iran, Cyprus and terrorism would top the agenda while commentary focused on Turkey's East/West orientation as played out in Western media. On 11/30, mainstream newspapers, web news sites and Turkish television gave wide play to Newsweek's analysis "Turkey Is the Real Winner of the Iraq War," and played up the magazine's observation on the rising brash reputation of PM Erdogan in the West. In other coverage, media carried Turkish language translations of New York Times commentary by Alistair Crooke, stating that the US, Turkey and Iran should be mindful of a new equilibrium, and the Foreign Affairs article on "How the West

Lost Turkey." In substantive reporting over the holiday, Islamic-oriented Today's Zaman headlined that "US Praises Turkey's Role Amid Axis Shift," and in citing recent remarks by State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly, concluded that "the United States has appeared to dismiss concerns that Turkey's foreign policy orientation is shifting away from the West, saying Ankara stands out as a democratic model for its region." Citing the recent Washington Post editorial in "Turkey and West Are Condemned To Each Other," mainstream Milliyet said "the scathing commentary" reflects a stereotypical approach by Western observers, who are "basically in a state of panic because Turkey, free from the pressures of the Cold War, has started acting too independently for Western comfort." In "Murky American Minds, Murky Turkey," Zaman opines that "there is great congruence" between the WP article and the Obama administration's private concerns when it comes to the Erdogan government's democratic credentials and observes "timing of such pieces is particularly advantageous . . . because it will put the Turkish government on the defensive" and enable the US administration to "hide behind" public opinion when pressing for changes in Turkish policies. In "Another Critical US Trip" mainstream CNNTurk TV reported the irony that, despite the passage of two years, the main issue between the US and Turkey remains terrorism but predicted that the GoT will also press for the naming of a US Cyprus special envoy.

In continuing coverage on December 1, leftist Taraf headlined that "Israel and Iran Issues Will be in PM Erdogan's Briefcase" and adds that the US, in order to lower the pressures from the Armenian lobby in Washington, will pressure Turkey to pass the protocols signed with Armenia in the parliament. Citing a high-level government

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source, the paper also claims that Turkey is "upset" with Washington pressure to normalize relations with Israel and rejected press reports that Turkey had cancelled any civilian or military projects with Israel. Friday's mainstream Hurriyet quoted FM Davutoglu saying that "Erdogan will give three messages to President Obama regarding Iran: Everybody has the right to acquire nuclear technology for peaceful means; nuclear weapons are a big threat for the world and for the region; diplomacy and dialogue are needed to solve problems." Liberal Radikal columnist Cengiz Candar writes under the headline "While the Winner of Iraq War is Going to Washington" and refers to Newsweek's "Triumph of the Turks" article and says "recently Turkey gained respect for its international profile. The biggest credit in this gain should be given to AKP government and the architecture of the government's foreign policy, Ahmet Davutoglu. Now, the most important thing is to get Obama's support for this new profile. This will be the vital mission for PM Erdogan during his US visit." In "Suspicious Support," mainstream Vatan observes that Western laudatory commentary regarding Turkey's expanding foreign policy profile as flawed as "Western countries are expressing concern whether Turkey is trying to become a leader in the region for its own interests or for an Islamic regime."

#### Minaret Ban: A Storm of Anger (Sabah)

Turkish media across the political spectrum denounced the controversial Swiss decision to ban minarets in front page news and commentary. Mainstream Vatan headlines "Europe is Ashamed," liberal Radikal blasts "Reaction Showered on Switzerland," Haberturk TV Online headlines "Saying No to Minarets Causes Disillusionment," while Islamic-oriented Zaman claims "Minaret Banning Leaves Switzerland Alone in the World." In a "Storm of Anger" mainstream Sabah points to the Vatican's denouncement of the move as a blow to religious freedom and says that the referendum was a mistake as "Minarets are only symbols, just like churches having bells." Sabah columnist Mehmet Barlas quips that, in any case, "Muslims will not miss anything - they will look at their Swiss made watches and know it's time to pray." In "No to Minarets, Yes to Guns" mainstream Hurriyet news and commentary also takes aim, noting "this kind of democracy, never mind be able to bring freedom, will limit basic human rights."

#### More Troops to Afghanistan (Haberturk)

Media outlets today carry straightforward coverage on President Obama's speech today in which he's expected to outline his new Afghanistan war strategy. In an exclusive feature, pro-government

Haberturk headlines "More Troops to Afghanistan," predicting that President Obama will say that "it's getting more and more dangerous, and that "in order to finish our job in Afghanistan and leave the country as soon as possible, we must send more troops to prevent Taliban and Al Queda getting control." In "US Expects NATO Members to Send 10,000 More Troops to Afghanistan," Islamist-oriented Zaman notes, "Obama administration emphasized that US involvement in Afghanistan is not an open-ended period and will last only until the target is reached." CNNTurk TV online writes in "Clinton Calls Davutoglu on Afghanistan," that, "as President Obama is expected to detail a new strategy on Afghanistan in his address today, Secretary Clinton made several calls to a series of FMs including Turkish FM Davutoglu."

"Iran Mocks the World" (Radikal)

Liberal Radikal in "Iran Mocks the World," reports "Iran announced that its decision to build ten new nuclear plants is in retaliation to IAEA's resolution condemning Iran for building a new uranium enrichment site. Even Russia voices its concern and new sanctions are on the way." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet headlines "New Sanction Warning to Iran," highlighting "the reactions of the world leaders including British, German, French and Russian FMs following Iran's statement that it'll build ten more nuclear plants."

YouTube Ban Taken to European Court

Papers report on Monday that Turkey's Internet Technologies Association has applied to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)

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seeking the annulment of a ban imposed on access to YouTube since May 2008 over video clips insulting Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey. The association said the ban on YouTube has also restricted the right to education, noting that the educational content available on the site makes it a resource for universities and international organizations.

Genetically Modified Organisms in Turkey

Mainstream Aksam reports the Turkish government has changed the related regulations November 20, and brought a condition that Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) will be indicated on the package of food products. Information released by the Turkish Farming Ministry said contrary to the public-wide claims, production of GMOs was not allowed in Turkey. The ministry said the countries that produce GMOs were the US, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, India, China, Paraguay, South Africa and the EU. It also said GMOs were not allowed in infant food products in Turkey, adding that Turkey was far ahead of the EU countries regarding GMO usage.

Upcoming events:

Q December 1: President Gul will pay an official visit to Jordan from December 1-3.

Q December 1: Foreign Minister Davutoglu will join an OSCE meeting in Athens on December 1-2.

Q December 1: Turkish Cyprus 'President' Mehmet Ali Talat and 'Foreign Minister' Huseyin Ozgurgun will visit Ankara to meet with President Gul and Prime Minister Erdogan.

Q December 1: Energy Minister Taner Yildiz will join a luncheon of the American-Turkish Business Council.

Q December 4: High Military Council (YAS) will hold its regular fall meeting.

Q December 7: Prime Minister Erdogan will visit the US.

TV News (NTV)

Domestic

Q A 16 year-old teenager was shot dead during violent demonstrations in the city of Mersin marking the 31st founding of the PKK. Police broke up a demonstration by young Kurds in Istanbul, and violence flared in other Turkish cities with large Kurdish populations.

Q The death toll in the swine flu outbreak in Turkey climbs to 195.

Q Turkey's Alevi Bektasi Federation is expected support a new party to be founded by Independent MP Ufuk Uras in 2010.

Q Financial Times says the fact that Turkey has finally broken free

from the IMF's tutelage is a source of pride for Turkey.

#### World

Q 20 Turkish pilgrims have died in Saudi Arabia during Hajj.

Q The head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, Ali Akbar Salehi, said Iran does not want to leave the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Q British PM Gordon Brown announced an additional 500 soldiers would be deployed in Afghanistan in December.

Q Stocks in Dubai plunged more than 7 percent on Monday, the first day of trading after the Persian Gulf state's debt problems rocked financial markets around the world.

JEFFREY